THE Chriſtian Hiſtory;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *England Scotland* and *America*.

Saturday FEBRUARY 25. 1743,4. § Nº. 52.

The Rev. Mr. ALLIS's *Account of the Revival of Religion at* SOMERS *finiſhed.*

IT fills me with Tears of ſurprizing Joy to ſee that *Love* to the Houſe of GOD and *his Worſhip*, that ſeeming Pleaſure and Satisfaction there is in attending upon all religious Duties, even in thoſe that in Times paſt ſeem'd to live unmindful of GOD and his Worſhip. Some who ſeldom came to the public Worſhip of GOD on the *Lord's-Day* do now conſtantly and devoutly attend thereupon: and not only the Worſhip of GOD on the *Lord's-Day*, but on the *Week-Day*. The Houſe of GOD is very much fill'd; where a *public Lecture* hath been preach'd *once a Fortnight* for ſome Time; and for ſome Months paſt almoſt conſtantly *once* a *Week*. And there is not only a devout Attendance hereupon by thoſe Perſons that ſeem'd to be almoſt without a Form of Religion; but thoſe Perſons are conſtantly meeting together *once* or *twice* a *Week* on the *Evening*, to ſeek GOD by Prayer. There is *but one Night in the Week* as I am informed, but what *elderly* or *middle Aged* or *young People* or *Children* meet together in different Parts of the Town in Companies, to pray to GOD and ſing Praiſes to him. And what is very remarkable, *Children* that could not be perſuaded thro' Fear without Difficulty to ſtep out of the Door in a dark Evening, will now go alone *two* and ſome *three Miles* thro' a thick Wood, to join together in praying, reading, and ſinging Pſalms: the dark Night is no Hindrance to them, nor the Badneſs of the Weather. Thoſe *Youths* that delighted themſelves in Frolicking and Miſchief, have wholly left it off; and ſay, they take more Pleaſure and Satisfaction in ſerving GOD, than ever they did in the Ways of *Sin* and *Satan*. Yea, thoſe Things that were pleaſing to them, are now as the Gall of Aſps and

Wormwood. Some *Heads* of *Families*, as far as I can learn, that never pray'd in their Families, are now conſtant therein Morning and Evening.

Some that have wrong'd others in their Names and Eſtates, have freely and voluntarily confeſs'd their Faults and made Satisfaction. I know of many ſuch Inſtances.

Quarrels and Contentions between Neighbour and Neighbour which have ſubſiſted for many Years, and no Means could effect a Reconciliation, are now at an End: and there is ſeemingly an hearty Love and Affection to each other. Thoſe Perſons who were ſomewhat addicted to Swearing and very much to vain frothy Expreſſions, have wholly left them off, and have a Savour of Religion in all their Diſcourſes.

It would take up a great Deal of Time, more perhaps than you would be willing to ſpend in reading, if I ſhould attempt to let you know the *various Impreſſions* that are made upon the Minds of Profeſſors, whereby ſuch a Change is wrought. To inſtance in a few Particulars.

Some have a great Senſe of the *Majeſty* of GOD, which fills them with Fear and Trembling; and a Senſe of their own Nothingneſs, which makes them to cry out, *I am a Worm and no Man.*

Some have a Senſe of the *Holineſs* of GOD, and for a long Time can't be brought to think that ever God will admit ſuch ſinful and unholy Creatures into the heavenly World when they die.

Some have a Senſe of the *Power* of GOD, and his Ability to ſave Sinners.

Some have a Senſe of the *Beauty*, of the *Excellency* and *Love* of CHRIST, which draws forth their whole Souls to him.

Some have a Senſe of the evil and vile Nature of *Sin*. To ſome, *particular Sins* are ſo ſet home to their Conſciences, as that they are in dreadful Diſtreſs and Anguiſh of Spirit Day and Night for ſome Weeks together, before they find Eaſe for their burthen'd Souls.

Some have a Senſe of the *Evil of Sin* in general, and particular Sins not ſet home to their Conſciences remarkably. Others, *particular Sins* fill with great Anguiſh and Diſtreſs. Such an one I was ſent for to converſe with.

It

It was a *Child* about *nine Years of Age*, which ſeem'd to me to be in as great Anguiſh and Diſtreſs by Reaſon of *ſome particular Sins*, as if it had actual Flames of Fire ſeiz'd on it. There were ſeveral *Children* in the Room and *Negroes*: unto whom it addreſs'd it ſelf, particularly warning 'em of theſe and thoſe Sins for which She ſaid ſhe muſt burn in Hell: It addreſs'd herſelf to the *Negroes*, ſaying "*Don't go to Hell* "*with me, I would go alone, I don't deſire* Indians *and* Negroes "*ſhould be as miſerable as I ſhall be by and by.*" I adviſ'd her to lift up her Heart to GOD in Prayer for Mercy: and accordingly ſhe did, and made Uſe of this Expreſſion in the moſt lively Manner; "*Good LORD let me ſee all my Sins*; "*but don't let me ſee them all at once; let me ſee them as I* "*can bear them: if thou letteſt me ſee them all at once, I ſhall* "*immediately go to Hell.*

Some other Inſtances there have been among us of *Children* and *Youth*; whoſe Anguiſh and Diſtreſs for Sin hath been ſo great, that I can no Ways deſcribe it to you, to convey a true and lively Idea thereof.

And ſome who have been in great Diſtreſs, have had in due Time proportionable Joy and Comfort: and others again not. GOD hath infinite Ways almoſt, if I may ſo expreſs it, of beginning and carrying on his own Work in the Hearts of the Children of Men.

There have been ſome among us of *all Ages* and *Sexes* that have ſhar'd in the boundleſs Riches of GOD's Grace: *middle-aged* Perſons, *elderly*; and *one* of *ſeventy-ſix Years of Age* hath been as I am in Charity bound to think, a Subject of the amazing Power and Grace of GOD.

Chriſtians have been wonderfully fill'd, enliven'd and quickened by the SPIRIT of GOD. But the *riſing Generation* hath in a more general and remarkable Manner ſhar'd in the *Out-pouring* of the SPIRIT of GOD.

I have given you a ſhort but imperfect Account of the wonderful Things GOD hath done and is doing among us. But you would think (I may ſafely ſay) that the one Half had not been told you, if you knew the Circumſtances of this People in Times paſt, & what they are now. We are almoſt in every Reſpect a reformed People. To GOD be all the Praiſe and Glory.

I would intreat your Prayers at the Throne of Grace, both for me and this People; that we may have ſtill the

Tokens of the divine Preſence, and that we may live up to the peculiar and diſtinguiſhing Mercies of GOD manifeſted toward a ſinful and backſliding People.

From your unworthy Servant and Fellow-Labourer
In the Goſpel Miniſtry,
SAMUEL ALLIS.

N.B Some Months ago, we ſet a part a *Day* of *public Thankſgiving* to GOD, for the Revival of Religion, and the remarkable Out-pouring of his SPIRIT. And I think there were evident Tokens of God's owning us and accepting of our Sacrifices.

Revival of Religon at MIDDLEBOROUGH *in the County of* PLYMOUTH, *about thirty-ſeven Miles* South Eaſtward *of* Boſton: *in a Letter from the Rev. Mr.* PETER THACHER *Paſtor of the Firſt* Church *or* Eaſterly Precinct *there, to the Rev. Mr.* Prince *of* Boſton.

Rev. & D. Sir. *Middleborough, Dec.* 21. 1741.

I Take this Opportunity to give you a *more particular Account* of the *glorious Work* of *Converſion* and *Converſion* of Souls the ſovereign GOD is lately carrying on by the Preaching of the Word. I do it, Sir, that GOD may have the *ſole Glory of his Grace,* to ſilence Gainſayers, and encourage the Hearts of thoſe engag'd in and purſuing this Work.

It hath been a Time of fatal Deadneſs thro' the Town. Religion dying, Prayers dropt in many Families, the Ways to Zion unoccupied: *But one* I think in the Space of *near two Years* that had *offer'd* to *Communion.* Some *Half a Dozen* had been rouzed by Mr. TENNENT's Preaching: but they were before blameleſs Profeſſors. Theſe with ſome conſiderable Additions to their Number were again awakened by the Miniſtry of the pious Mr. ROGERS. Yet tho' their Convictions were remarkable, they ſeem'd to give no additional Strength to the Power of Religion; becauſe among thoſe that had the Form of Godlineſs before. But hereby GOD was preparing me ſome ſweet Helpers; tho' the Devil from this Circumſtance took Occaſion to reproach this Work: ſo that from this Time I may date the open Strife between the Houſes of *David* and of *Saul* that yet ſubſiſts. The Enmity and Oppoſition to this Work in all the Parts of it,

it, is with utmoſt Art and Induſtry propagated; ſupported with the moſt palpable Lyes, falſe Inſinuations, and injurious Reports, and many other Ways to ſcatter the Seeds of Diviſion among us; of which we were languiſhing by the deep Wounds before.

To return, it was on *a Tueſday*, I bemoan'd my ſad Caſe to the neighbouring Miniſters at a public Lecture; propos'd a Faſt the *next Week* on the *Wedneſday*; and had the ready Promiſe of the Company of diverſe of them. The *Friday* after GOD ſent that dear Youth Mr. CROCKER. He preach'd *two Sermons*: conſiderable Meltings. *Saturday Morning* preach'd another: after the Exerciſe was over, *one* cried-out bitterly, that affected *many*. Diverſe *more* were wounded on the *Sabbath*: the Evening after which, my Room was fill'd with diſtreſs'd Souls. *Next Day* Mr. *Crocker* came again and preach'd: the Aſſembly generally melted, but ſilent; 'till the Bleſſing given, and we had got without Doors, when there were *many*, I ſuppoſe I may ſay *near one Hundred* cried out. We return'd, and loudly invited them into the Meeting Houſe again, which they crowded into with loud Screiches, wringing of Hands, and Floods of Tears, that could not be *altogether* ſilenced to attend the farther Prayers made with and Counſels given to them. Many of theſe Diſtreſs'd were of the neighbouring Pariſhes. As I was turning from the Crowd, *many* whiſper'd thus in my Ears, '*O my dear Mi-*
'*niſter I never loved you before, but now I do.*' &c. My Rooms *that Night* were crowded. I preach'd to them; to which they gave ſilent and ſerious Attention. But Oh, after the Service, what Heart-affecting Crys! One crying to another, "*O*
"*I am going to Hell! I have frolick'd with you and ſinned*
"*with you! O what diſmal Company ſhall we be one for another*
"*in Hell! O the Hours and Nights we have ſpent in Singing*
"*and Dancing and frolicking Mirth!* On every ſuch Word, they would anew ſcreich, cry, condemn, and warn each other: and I think it went round the Rooms; *O the curſed Frolicks! They had never prayed in their Lives! had not hearken'd to any Counſels, but ſhun'd their Miniſter as a Serpent, for fear of ſome Counſel or Reproof.*

Tueſday Night I preach'd again, being the Evening before the *Faſt*. A tedious Storm it was: yet a conſiderable Aſſembly. The *Faſt-Day*, a crowded Aſſembly: and many crying out after the Exerciſes were over. Since which there have

have been *ordinarily at every Sermon* more or leſs wounded, as appear'd afterwards.

I will now obſerve, *on whom chiefly* this Work hath taken hold, and *how* it operates. It hath in the firſt Place, awakened *many Church Members*, where it firſt began. They were detected of their *Hypocriſy*. One told me, "*He did but* "*delude me, when he offered himſelf to Communion*; he took "more Pleaſure in a Frolick, than at the Lord's Table; "rather be with Singers and Dancers and rude Jeſters than "with ſerious Perſons." Another, "That notwithſtand-"ing his Profeſſion, he was glad to be diverted, as he often "was, from *ſecret and family Devotion*". Others convinced of *ſecret Wrongs* they had done to the *Name* and *Eſtate* of others, of which they never were ſuſpected. *More than a Score of theſe Inſtances*. And can this be from any other than the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD? Others confeſſing their *ſecret Prejudices* to their *Miniſters*; yet never ſuſpected. Numbers brought to *pray* in their *Families*, to *inſtruct* and *catechiſe* their *Children*. The Tavern Clubs all divided. To give you a feeling Inſtance. The *laſt Monday* was a *general Military Muſter* of *three Companies*. I was told that one of the Heads of thoſe Clubs got a Chamber full of his Companions about him; and there with many Tears, related the Trouble he had endured for his Sins with them in that very Chamber; and then as well as he could painted out his Terrors for thoſe Sins, beg'd and warned them to repent in Time. *That Evening* before ſeven o'Clock they were generally divided in the ſeveral Neighbourhoods into little praying Aſſemblies: but few obſerved to be diſguiſed with Drink. Can this be from any other than the SPIRIT of GOD?

Thoſe under this Work are exceeding full of *Love* one to another; even where old Grudges were before. *Religion*, eſpecially the *Nature*, *Neceſſity* and *Marks* of CONVERSION, is become the general Subject of Converſation. But few have appeared with ſuch Tranſports of Joy, as in other Places; but have attained to ſome comfortable Hopes that they do not reſt ſhort of CHRIST. Thoſe who have had ſuch Joys, tell me they arrive to it in this Way; Firſt awakened to ſee the many and horrible Acts of Sin thro' their Lives; then led to a View of their Original Sin, the Guiltineſs and utter Helpleſneſs of their Condition, of the Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST: They beheld him in his Word, embrace

embrace and go out to the Promiſe, and CHRIST in the Promiſe; and this the Foundation of their Comfort: They feel the Change in their Wills. Coming from an Evening Lecture, I aſk'd an INDIAN WOMAN, "*Well how is it* "*with your Soul*"-----"*O Sir*, ſaid ſhe, "*I am a ſinful*, "*impotent, odious, wretched Creature; but when I can get to* "*a Promiſe*, CHRIST *helping me, I find Comfort and Reſt.*" *Behold O Deſpiſers and wonder*, &c. This is indeed a common Anſwer I have from ſeveral *Indians*: One *Child* of about *nine Years old*, another about *ſeven*, beſides ſome *grown* Perſons.

The Complaints of the *Awakened* are various. Generally of *Heart-Plagues*: thePain of which made one of the ſtrongeſt *young Men* in Town ſweat in a cold Seaſon. Some of *ſpiritual Ignorance*. Some of one Sin, ſome of another. All of their *Pride* and *Obſtinacy* of Will, and *Enmity* of Heart to an holy GOD: this Complaint general. Again, their Help they ſeek by the reading and hearing GOD's *Word*: That's now precious to them: they ſee it a *Rule*, a *perfect Rule* of *Faith* and *Practice*: They are greedy to hear it preach'd. I have *public Lectures* every *Tueſday* & *Friday*: and from the *Meeting Houſe*, they follow me to *my own*, for another Sermon: ſo that one Sermon doth not ſatisfy them in a Day, tho' often revolving, and from a feeble weak decay'd old Man too.

To conclude, where *the Work* is deep and effectual, it appears with *fervent Devotion* in and to all the *Acts* of *ſocial Communion* with GOD; Praying, Hearing, Singing, holy Conference, ſtrict Sabbath-Sanctification, a new Turn of *Thought* on ſpiritual and eternal Things, and a new Flame of *Affection* to them and Delight in them. I can't deſcend into Particulars; Time is precious with me, and I can't attend all in their Deſires.

Now if *theſe Inſtances*, which might be multiply'd, are judged of in a ſcriptural Light; I think all the regenerate World, not bias'd & prepoſſeſs'd, muſt judge this to bear the *true Characteriſticks* of the *genuine Work* of the HOLY SPIRIT, and can't without Blaſphemy againſt the HOLY GHOST be imputed to an evil Spirit. Oh that the Diſpiſers would believe CHRIST for *his Works ſake*: or doubtleſs if they don't, they muſt wonder and periſh. The Oppoſitions to it, Miſrepreſentations and Accuſations of it, are but ſo many Arguments to prove it a divine Work, and an Evidence that the holy GOD is making

making great Haſte to encompaſs his Elect: and when that is over, *the Door will be ſhut!* Wo to them that ſhall be left! What this portends, the LORD will prepare his Jewels for; notwithſtanding, the worſt that can be ſaid to defame or leſſen the Glory of CHRIST in it. May the *Word* of the LORD run more and more, and our REDEEMER be more and more glorify'd! Dear Sir, help me with your Prayers, that I may be found faithful, in every Capacity, under every Trial & Temptation, that annoys and follows me, even until Death. To the Grace of our dear LORD I recommend you, and deſire to be by you recommended, and am your unworthy yet loving Brother,

PETER THACHER.

WHO can deſcribe the Joys that riſe,
Thro' all the Courts of Paradiſe,
To ſee a Prodigal return,
To ſee an Heir of Glory born.

With Joy the FATHER doth approve
The Fruit of his eternal Love;
The SON with Joy looks down and ſees
The Purchaſe of his Agonies.

The SPIRIT takes Delight to view
The holy Soul he form'd anew;
And Saints and Angels join to ſing
The growing Empire of their KING.

Dr. WATTS.

CORRECTIONS *from No.* 41. *inclusively.*

PAge 321, l. 20. read ungrateful and diſhonourable.
p. 326, l. laſt but 12, r. *Hope* that is *within them*,
p. 327 l. 14. r. to be *Pleaſantneſs*
p. 383, l. laſt but 4, r. *Generality* of *Profeſſors*
p. 384, l. 28. r. till it was late
p. 404, l. 4, r. the Hand of Whom
p. 405, l. 7, r. And their *Lives*

ADVERTISEMENT.

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